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C O N T E N T S

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THAILAND: Government will make no major changes in China policy. (Page 4)

USSR - YEMEN (ADEN): Soviets provided logistical aid for Adeni cross-border raid. (Page 6)

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THAILAND: The government has decided against any major change in its China policy, although it evidently is trying to give the impression of increasing flexibility.

The National Security Council (NSC) voted on 3 November to continue the ban against private trade and contacts with China. It decided against any early government to government trade but referred the question to the Ministry of Economic Affairs for additional study. The council took negative positions on proposals that the government speak about Communist China in a more favorable way or seek to elicit Peking's views via unofficial contacts. It did, however, indicate that Bangkok might respond favorably if Peking, for example, invited a Thai sports team to China.

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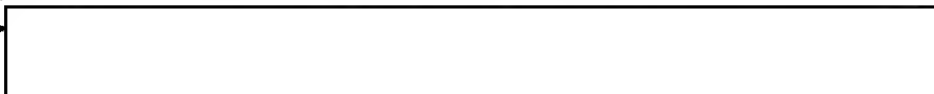
Government leaders are describing the recent decisions, however, as a cautious step forward and as evidence of Bangkok's desire for better relations with Peking. Prime Minister Thanom, for example, told the press that a trade link should be the first step in a new relationship between Thailand and China, and mentioned the possibility of cultural or athletic groups going to China. The soft line is probably intended to assuage public uneasiness over being on the losing side in last week's UN General Assembly vote on Chinese representation. Bangkok's support of the US resolution has provoked some sharp domestic press commentary on the necessity of placing consideration of Thailand's geographic position above a desire to accommodate the US.

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Although Bangkok is not prepared for any major forward movement at the moment, its public position could be intended to signal that it remains interested in improving relations and also to elicit a response from Peking. There appears to be sentiment among the hardliners in the government that the next move toward better relations should come from Peking.



USSR - YEMEN (ADEN): Soviet advisers provided logistical assistance for a recent Adeni raid against dissident tribesmen.

25X1 [redacted] the Soviets played no operational role but more than 45 advisers took part in servicing field guns and aircraft and airlifting Adeni troops and weapons. The "hit-and-run" expedition took place on 17 October, when several hundred Adeni troops crossed the Yemeni border to attack a concentration of anti-Aden dissidents. There has been a minor revival of dissident activity in recent weeks, and Adeni Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Ali Nasir Muhammad spent ten days in Moscow in early October reportedly seeking additional military assistance.

Soviet advisers in the past have taken part in activities of this type in the southern Sudan and, in 1968, in Yemen (Sana). In both, remote locations provided a low-risk opportunity to shore up friendly governments. In Aden, the Soviets have succeeded in gaining access to air and maritime facilities. Soviet naval activity in the Indian Ocean would be aided by use of a port with reliable provision and repair facilities, and the port of Aden is one of the best in the area. To date, however, the Soviets have limited themselves to infrequent port calls.

[redacted]

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